

The conuersyon of swerers.



*Fig. in face.*

Arrived to the entrance of D



Amonge all thynges nothyng so prouffyttable  
As is science with the sentencypous scrpyture  
For worldly rychesse is often transmutable  
As dayly dothe appere well in bre  
Yet scyens a bydeth and is moost sure  
After pouerte to attayne grete rychesse  
Scyens is cause of promocion doubtles

I lytell or nought expert in poetrye  
Remembryng my youth so lyght and frayle  
Purpose to compple here full breuynatly  
I lytell treatyse wofull to bewayle  
The cruell sweters whiche do god assayle  
On euery syde his swete body to tere  
With terryble othes as often as they swere

But all for drede plunged in neglygence  
My penne dothe quake to presume to endyte  
But hope at laste to recure this science  
Growtheth me ryght hardely to wyte  
To deuopde ydlenesse by good appetyte  
For ydlenesse the grete moder of synne  
Euery byce is redy to lette ynn

I with the same ryght gretely infecte  
Lykely to deye tyll grace by medecyne  
Recured my seknes my payne to abiecte  
Commaundyng me by her hye power deuyn  
To drawe this treatyse for to enlumpne  
The reders therof by penytencyall pyte  
And to pardon me of theyr benygnyte

The Conuersion of Swears, made &  
compyled by Stephen Harsys. for J. G.  
Wycken de Worde, 1509.

**R**ight myghty p<sup>r</sup>inces of euery crysten regyō  
I sende you gretynge moche hertly & grace  
Right wel to gouern vpright your dominio  
And all your lordes I greete in lyke case  
By this my lettre your hertes to enbrace  
Besechynge you to p<sup>r</sup>ynthe it in your mynde  
How for your sake I toke on me mankynde

And as a lambe moost mekely dyde enclyne  
To suffre the dethe for your redempcyon  
And ye my kynges whiche do nowe domyne  
Quet my comons in terrestreall mancyon  
By p<sup>r</sup>yncely p<sup>r</sup>eemynence and Juredyccyon  
In your regall courtes do suffre me be rente  
And my tender body with blode all bespente

Withouth my grace ye maye nothyng p<sup>r</sup>euayle  
Though ye be kynges for to mayntene your see  
To be a kyng it may nothyng auayle  
But yf my grace p<sup>r</sup>eserue his dygnyte  
Beholde your seruauntes how they do tere me  
By cruell othes now vpon euery syde  
About the worlde launcynge my woundes wyde

All the graces whiche I haue you shewed  
Renoule in mynde ryght ofte ententyfly  
Beholde my body with bloody droppes endewed  
Within your realmes nowe tozre lo pyteously  
Towsed and tugged with othes cruelly  
Some my heed some myn armes and face  
Some my herte do all to rente and race

They nelve agayne do hange me on the rode  
They tere my sydes and are nothynge dysmayde  
My woundes they open and deuoure my blode  
I god and man moost wofully arayde  
To you complayne it maye not be denyde  
Ye nowe do tug me / ye tere me at the roote  
Yet I to you am chese refuyte and boote

Wherfoze ye kynges reygnyng in renoune  
Resourme your seruauntes in your courte abused  
To good example of euery maner towne  
So that theyr othes whiche they longe haue bled  
On payne and punysshement be holly refused  
Make as a Lambe I suffre theyr grete wronge  
I maye take vengraunce though I tary longe

I do fozbere I wolde haue you amende  
And graunte you mercy and ye wyll it take  
O my swete bzederne why do ye offende  
Agayne to tere me whiche deryd foz your sake  
Lose ny kyndenes and frome synne awake  
I hyde redeme you from the deuylls chayne  
And spyte of me ye wyll to hym agayne

Made I not heuen the moost glourous mansyon  
In whiche I wolde be gladde to haue you in  
Now come swete bzetherne to myn habytacyon  
Alas good bzederne with your mortall synne  
Why flee ye from me / to tozne agayne begynne  
I wrought you I bought you ye can it not denye  
Yet to the deuyll ye go nowe wyllngly



A.iii.



See  
 Me kynde  
 Be  
 Agayne  
 My payne (in mynde  
 Ketepe  
 My swete bloode  
 On the roode (my broder  
 Wyde the good

My face ryght red \*  
 Myn armes spred (thynke none oder \*  
 My woundes bled \*  
 Beholde thou my lyde \*  
 Wounded so ryght wyde (all for thyne owne sake \*  
 Bledynge soze that tyde \*  
 Thus for the I snerted \*  
 Why arte þo harde herted (þy swerynge aslake  
 Be by me conuerted  
 Cere me now no moze  
 My woundes are soze (and come to my grace  
 Leue swerynge therfore  
 I am redy \*  
 To graunte mercy (for thy trespase  
 To the truely \*  
 Come now nere  
 My frende dere befoze me  
 And appere \*  
 I so  
 In wo le se \*  
 Wyde go \*  
 I

Crye the  
Hy



Unto me dere broder my loue and my herte  
Turmente me no moze with thyn othes grete  
Come vnto my Joye and agayne reuerte  
From the deuylles snare and his lutyl net  
Beware of the worlde all aboute the set  
Thy fleshe is redy by concupyscence  
To burne thy herte with curled vyolence

Thoughe these thye enemyes do soze the assaile  
Upon euery syde with daungerous inquite  
But yf thou lyst they may nothyng preuaile  
For yet subdue the with all theyr extremyte  
To do good or yll all is at thy lyberte  
I do graunte the grace thyn enemyes to subdue  
Swete broder accepte it theyr power to extue

And ye kynges and prynces of hie noblenes  
With dukes and lordes of euery dygnyte  
Indued with manhode wysdome and ryches  
Ouer the commons haupnge the soueraynte  
Correcte them whiche so do tere me  
By cruell othes without repentaunce  
Amende be tyme lest I take vengeaunce

Exod' vicesimo / non decipies nomen dei tui in vānū

Unto the man I gaue commaundement  
Not to take the name of thy god baynfully  
As not to swere but at tyme conuenient  
Before a Iuge to bere recorde truely  
Nampnge my name with reuerence mekely  
Unto the Iuge than there in presence  
By my name to gyue to the good credence

I my brederne yf that I be wrothe  
It is for cause ye fallſly by me ſwere  
Ye knowe yourſelfe that I am very trothe  
Yet wrongfully ye do me rente and tere  
Ye neyther loue me nor my Juſtice fere  
And yf ye dyde ye wolde full gentylly  
Obeie my byddyng well and perſytely

The worldly kynges hauynge the ſoueraunte  
ye do well obey without reſſtence  
ye dare not take theyr names in vanyte  
But with grete honoure and eke reuerence  
Than my name more hye of magnyſſyſſence  
ye ought more to drede whiche am kyng of all  
Bothe god and man and reygne celeſtyall

No erthely man loueth you ſo well  
As I do / whiche mekely dyde enclpne  
For to redeme you from the fendes of hell  
Takynge your kynde by my godhede drynke  
you were the fendes I dyde make you myne  
For you ſwete bretherne I was on the rode  
Grynge my body my herte and my blode



Than why do ye in euery maner of place  
 With cruell othes tere my body and herte  
 My lydes and woundes it is a pyteous care  
 Alas swete byederne I wolde you conuerte  
 For to take vengeaunce ye do me coherete  
 From the hous of swerers shall not be absent  
 The plage of Justyce to take punysshement

*Can. de Ecclesiasticis. xxxiii. Vir multum lacrimis impletus iniquitate.  
 e. non discedet a domo eius plaga.*

A man moche swerynge with grete inquite  
 Shall be replete and from his mancyon  
 The plage of vengeaunce shall not cessed be  
 Wherfoze ye byederne full of abusyon  
 Take ye good hede to this dyscrypcyon  
 Come now to me and axe forgyuenes  
 And be penytente and haue it doutles

*Augustinus. Non potest male mori qui bene vixit et viz bene moritur  
 & male vixit.*

Who in this worldelyueth well and ryghtwysly  
 Shall deye well by ryght good knowlegynge  
 Who in this worldelyueth yll and wryngfully  
 Shall hardly scape to haue good endynge  
 I do graunte mercy but no tyme enlongynge  
 Wherfoze good byederne whyles that ye haue space  
 Amende your lyfe and come vnto my grace

My wordes my prelates vnto you do preche  
For to conuerte you from your wretchednes  
But ytell awayleth you now for to teche  
The worlde hathe cast you in suche blyndnes  
Lyke vnto stones your hertes hathe hardnes  
That my swete wordes may not reconlyse  
Your hertes harde with mortall synne so hyle

Wo worthe your hertes so planted in pryde  
Wo worthe your wrath and mortall enuye  
Wo worthe slouth that dothe with you abyde  
Wo worthe also inmesurable glorony  
Wo worthe your tedpys synne of lechery  
Wo worthe you whome I gaue free wyll  
Wo worthe couetyse that dothe your soules spyll

Wo worthe shorte Joye cause of payne eternall  
Wo worthe you that be so peruerted  
Wo worthe your pleasures in the synnes mortall  
Wo worthe you for whome I soze smerted  
Wo worthe you euer but ye be conuerted  
Wo worthe you whose makynge I repente  
Wo worthe your horryble synne so vyolent

Wo worthe you whiche do me forsake  
Wo worthe you whiche wyllnyngely offende  
Wo worthe your swerynge whiche dothe not aslake  
Wo worthe you whiche wyll nothyng amende  
Wo worthe hyce that dothe on you attende  
Wo worthe your grete vnkynndenes to me

No worthe your hertes withouten pyte

No worthe your fallshode and your doublenelle

No worthe also your corrupte Iugement

No worthe delyte in worldely rychesse

No worthe bebate without extynguyshment

No worthe your wordes so moche impacient

No worthe you vnto whome I dyde bote

And no worthe you that tere me at the rote

Blessyd be ye that loue humylyte

Blessyd be ye that loue trouthe and pacence

Blessyd be ye folowynge werkes of cquyte

Blessyd be ye that loue well abstinence

Blessyd be ye byrgyns of excellence

Blessyd be ye whiche loue well vertue

Blessyd be ye whiche do the worldes eschue

Blessyd be ye that heuenly Joye do loue

Blessyd be ye in vertuous gouernaunce

Blessyd be ye whiche do pleasures reprove

Blessyd be ye that consyder my greuaunce

Blessyd be ye whiche do take repentaunce

Blessyd be ye remembrynge my passyon

Blessyd be ye makynge petycyon



Blessyd be ye folowynge my trace

Blessyd be ye louynge trybulacyon

Blessyd be ye not wyllynge to trespase

Blessyd be ye of my castyracyon

Blessyd be ye of good operacyon

Blessyd be ye vnto me ryght kynde  
Blessyd be you whiche haue me in your mynde

Blessyd be ye leuyng yll company  
Blessyd be ye hauntyng the vertuous  
Blessyd be ye that my name magnesy  
Blessyd be ye techyng the hypocous  
Blessyd be ye good and relygious  
Blessyd be ye in the lyfe temperall  
Whiche applye yourselfe to Joye celestyall

The bytyll worlde ryght often transmutable  
Who wyll in it his lyfe and tyme well spende  
Shall Joye attayne after incystmable  
For in the worlde he must fyrst condyscende.  
To take grete payne as his power wyll extende  
Agaynst the worlde the fleshe and the deuyll  
By my grete grace for to withstande theyr euyl

For who can be a gretter sole than he  
That spendeth his tyme to hym vncertayns  
For a breuyat pleasure of worldly banyte  
Than after that to haue eternall payne  
Who of the worlde delyteth and is fayne  
Shall after sorowe and cry be be  
In an other worlde quante sunt tenebye

Who is wiser than he that wyll applye  
In the worlde to take payne by due dysygence  
After shorte payne to come to grete glozye  
Whiche is eterne moost hye of excellence  
Where he shall se my grete magnyfycence

With many aungelles whiche for theyr solace  
Insacpately do beholde my face

Regarde no Joye of the erthly consystory  
For lyke as Dhehus dothe the snowe relente  
So passeth the Joyes of the worlde transytory  
Tyme renneth fast tyll worldly lyfe be spent  
Consyder this in your entendemente  
Blessed be they that my worde do here  
And kepe it well for they are to me dere

Therfore good byederne your hertes encline  
To loue and dyede me that am omnipotent  
Bothe god and man in Joye celestyne  
Beholde my body all to toryne and rent  
With your spytefull othes cruell and vyolent  
I loue you ye hate me ye are to harde herted  
I helpe you yet tere me lo how for you I smerted

Mercy and peace byde make an vnyte  
Bytvene you and me but trouthe & ryghtwysnesse  
Do now complayne byddyng my godheed se  
How that ye breke the lege of sothfastnesse  
They tell me that by Justyce doubtelesse  
I must take vengeaunce vpon you sykerly  
That by your swerynge/agayne me crucefy

For at the request of good mercy and peace  
I haue forborne you longe and many a daye  
Yet more and more your synnes do encrease  
Wherfore my Justyce wyll no more delaye

But take vengeaunce for all your proude araye  
I warne you ofte ye are nothyng the better  
But ye amende my vengenaunce shall be gretter

*Contra iuratores xpm in celo crucifigentes.  
per bernardū dicit dominus. Nonne satis  
pro te vulneratus sum: nonne satis pro te af-  
flictus sum: desine amplius peccare. qz magis  
aggrauat vulnus peccati q̄ vulnus lateris  
mei.*

Am not I wounded for the sufferyent  
Haue I not for the ynoughe afflyccyon  
Leue moze to synne by good amendement  
The wounde of synne to me is moze passyon  
Than the wounde of my syde for thy redempcyon  
Thoughe I do spare I shall you desteny  
But ye amende to brenne eternally

With my bloody woundes I dyde your chartre seale  
Why do you tete it / why do ye bryke it so  
Syth it to you is the eternall heale  
nd the releace of euerlastynge wo  
Beholde this lettre with the prynte also  
Of myn owne seale by perfyte portrature  
Prynte it in mynde and ye shall helthe recure

And ye kynges and lordes of renowne  
Crozte your seruauntes theyr swerynge to cease  
Come vnto me and cast your synne adowne  
And I my vengeaunce shall truly releace  
With grace and plente / I shall you encrace

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And brynge you whiche reuolue inwardly  
This is my complaynte to eternall glory.

A A E N.

¶ The Auctour as foloweth.

¶ So lytell treatyse deuoyde of eloquence  
Tremblynge for dreade to approche the maieste  
Of our souereynge lord surmountynge in excellence  
Put under the wyng of his benygnyte  
Submyttynge the to his mercyfull pytie.  
And beseeche hys grace to pardon thy rudnesse  
Whych of late was made to eschewe ydlenesse.

¶ Thus endeth the conuersyon of swerers, made  
and compyled by Stephen Hawys, groome of the  
chambre of our souerigne lorde Kyng Henry the  
seuenth. Enprynted at London, in Fletestrete, at  
the sygne of the Sonne, by Wynken de Worde,  
Prynter vnto the moost excellent prynces, my lady  
the kynges graundame, the yere of our Lord a  
MCCCCX. the first yere of the reigne of our  
souerayne lord kyng Henry the VIII.

*facsimile leaf*



*Facsimile leaf*